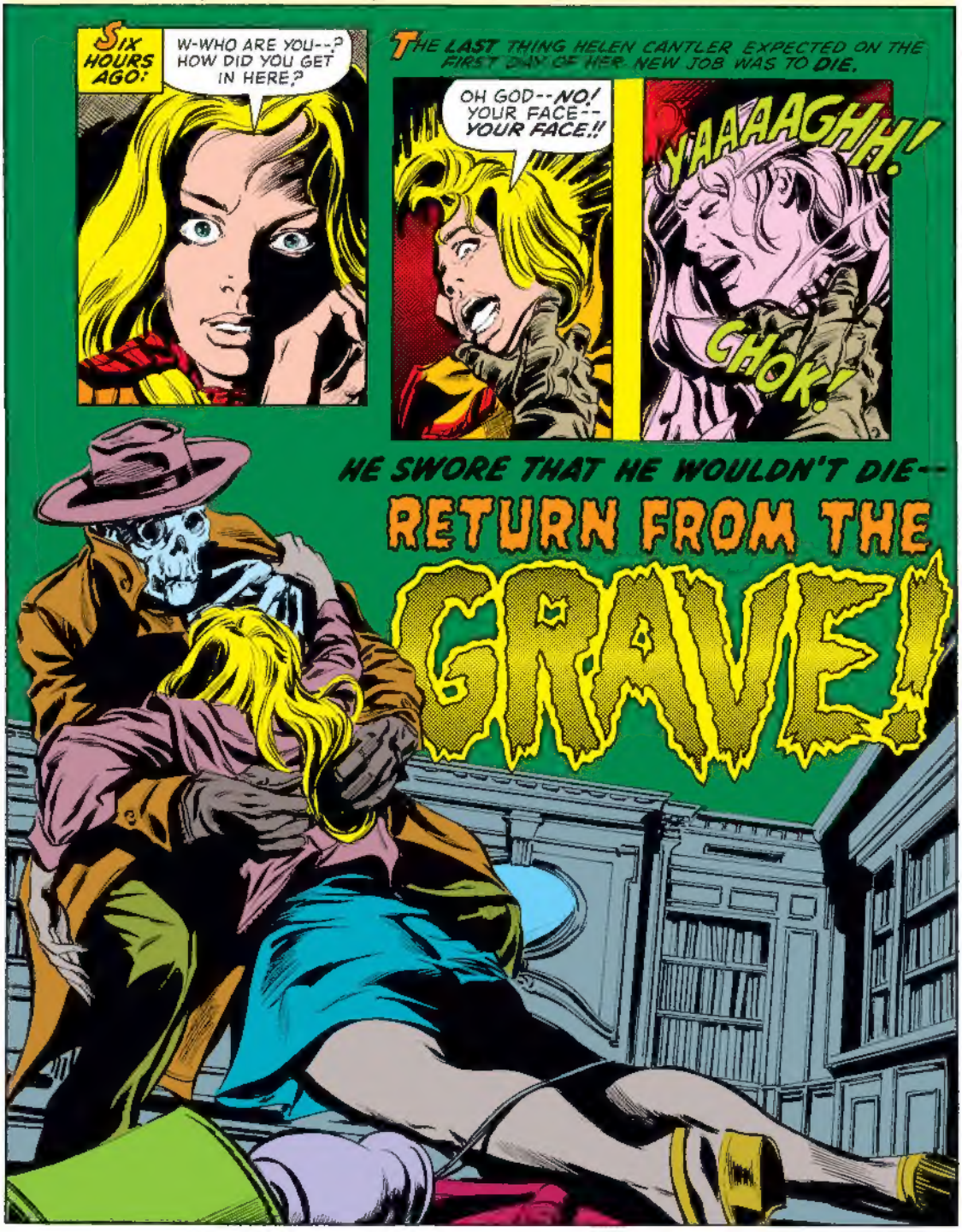
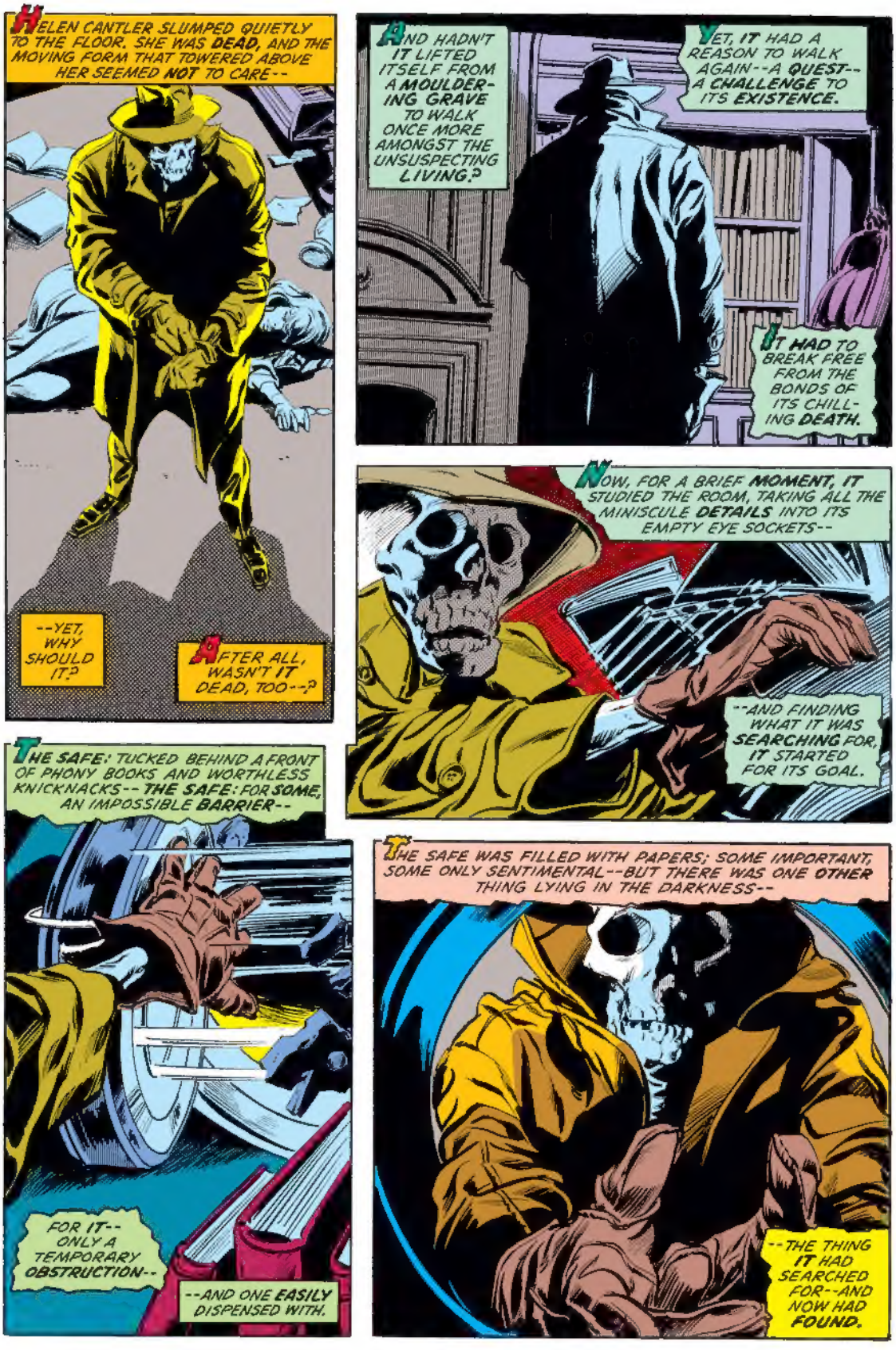
TOMB OF DRACULA
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
20¢
16
JAN
02143
THE TOMB OF DRACULA
BACK FROM THE GRAVE!

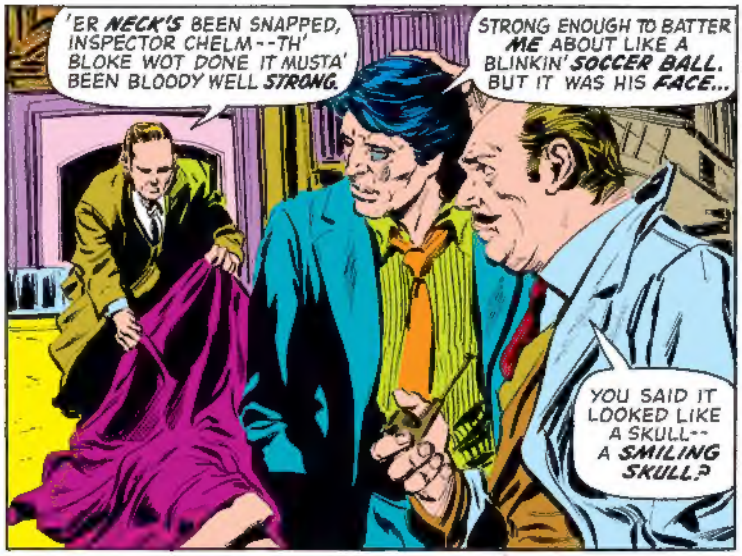
Stan Lee PRESENTS: TOMB OF DRACULA! ™

MARV WOLFMAN SCRIPT / GENE COLAN PENCILS / TOM PALMER INKS / ARTIE SIMEK, LETTERS TOM PALMER, COLORS / ROY THOMAS EDITOR


SIX HOURS AGO:
W-WHO ARE YOU--? HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE?
THE LAST THING HELEN CANTLER EXPECTED ON THE FIRST DAY OF HER NEW JOB WAS TO DIE.
OH GOD--NO! YOUR FACE--YOUR FACE!!
YAAAAGHH!
GHOK!
HE SWORE THAT HE WOULDN'T DIE--
RETURN FROM THE GRAVE!


HELEN CANTLER SLUMPED QUIETLY TO THE FLOOR. SHE WAS DEAD, AND THE MOVING FORM THAT TOWERED ABOVE HER SEEMED NOT TO CARE--
--YET, WHY SHOULD IT?
AFTER ALL, WASN'T IT DEAD, TOO--?
AND HADN'T IT LIFTED ITSELF FROM A MOULDERING GRAVE TO WALK ONCE MORE AMONGST THE UNSUSPECTING LIVING?
YET, IT HAD A REASON TO WALK AGAIN--A QUEST--A CHALLENGE TO ITS EXISTENCE.
IT HAD TO BREAK FREE FROM THE BONDS OF ITS CHILLING DEATH.
NOW, FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, IT STUDIED THE ROOM, TAKING ALL THE MINISCULE DETAILS INTO ITS EMPTY EYE SOCKETS--
--AND FINDING WHAT IT WAS SEARCHING FOR, IT STARTED FOR ITS GOAL.
THE SAFE: TUCKED BEHIND A FRONT OF PHONY BOOKS AND WORTHLESS KNICKNACKS-- THE SAFE: FOR SOME, AN IMPOSSIBLE BARRIER--
FOR IT-- ONLY A TEMPORARY OBSTRUCTION--
--AND ONE EASILY DISPENSED WITH.
THE SAFE WAS FILLED WITH PAPERS; SOME IMPORTANT, SOME ONLY SENTIMENTAL--BUT THERE WAS ONE OTHER THING LYING IN THE DARKNESS--
--THE THING IT HAD SEARCHED FOR--AND NOW HAD FOUND.

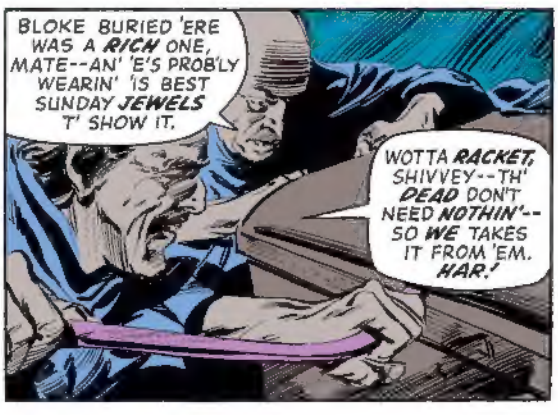
PLACING ITS PRIZE SECURELY IN ITS POCKET, THE SHADOW-SPECKED FORM TURNED TO LEAVE--
--BUT FOUND IN ITS WAY, JAMES JACKSON--SOLICITOR--AND THE MAN WHOSE SAFE IT JUST ROBBED.
HELEN--? WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME DID YOU DO TO HER--?
THE ROOM WAS DARK, BUT EVEN THROUGH THE DIMNESS HE SOUGHT OUT THE FEATURES OF THE INTRUDER'S FACE--AND HIS OWN BLANCHED STARK WHITE WITH FEAR...
...FOR JAMES JACKSON KNEW HE HAD SEEN THE FACE OF--DEATH.
DEATH: WHO MOVED WITH SLOW, DELIBERATE STEPS TOWARDS THE FRIGHTENED YOUNG ATTORNEY.
DEATH: WHOSE BODY REEKED OF FLESH DECAYING AND MAGGOTS SQUIRMING.
ARGGHHHHH!!
DEATH: WHO REACHED OUT TO JAMES JACKSON AND--ATTACKED!
JACKSON FELL BACK WITH A SICKENING GROAN--BUT THE THING STRUCK TWICE MORE, KNOCKING HIM SENSELESS TO THE FLOOR.
AND, PERHAPS ONE COULD CALL IT DEVINE FATE OR PROVIDENCE, BUT BEFORE THE THIRD BLOW CAME PLUMMETING DOWN ON HIM, JAMES JACKSON WAS ALREADY UNCONSCIOUS.
SEEING THE LIMP FORM BELOW, IT TURNED ONCE MORE TO LEAVE. IT HAD WHAT IT CAME FOR--AND THAT WAS ALL THAT WAS IMPORTANT--FOR NOW.


'ER NECK'S BEEN SNAPPED, INSPECTOR CHELM--TH' BLOKE WOT DONE IT MUSTA' BEEN BLOODY WELL STRONG.
STRONG ENOUGH TO BATTER ME ABOUT LIKE A BLINKIN' SOCCER BALL. BUT IT WAS HIS FACE...
YOU SAID IT LOOKED LIKE A SKULL--A SMILING SKULL?

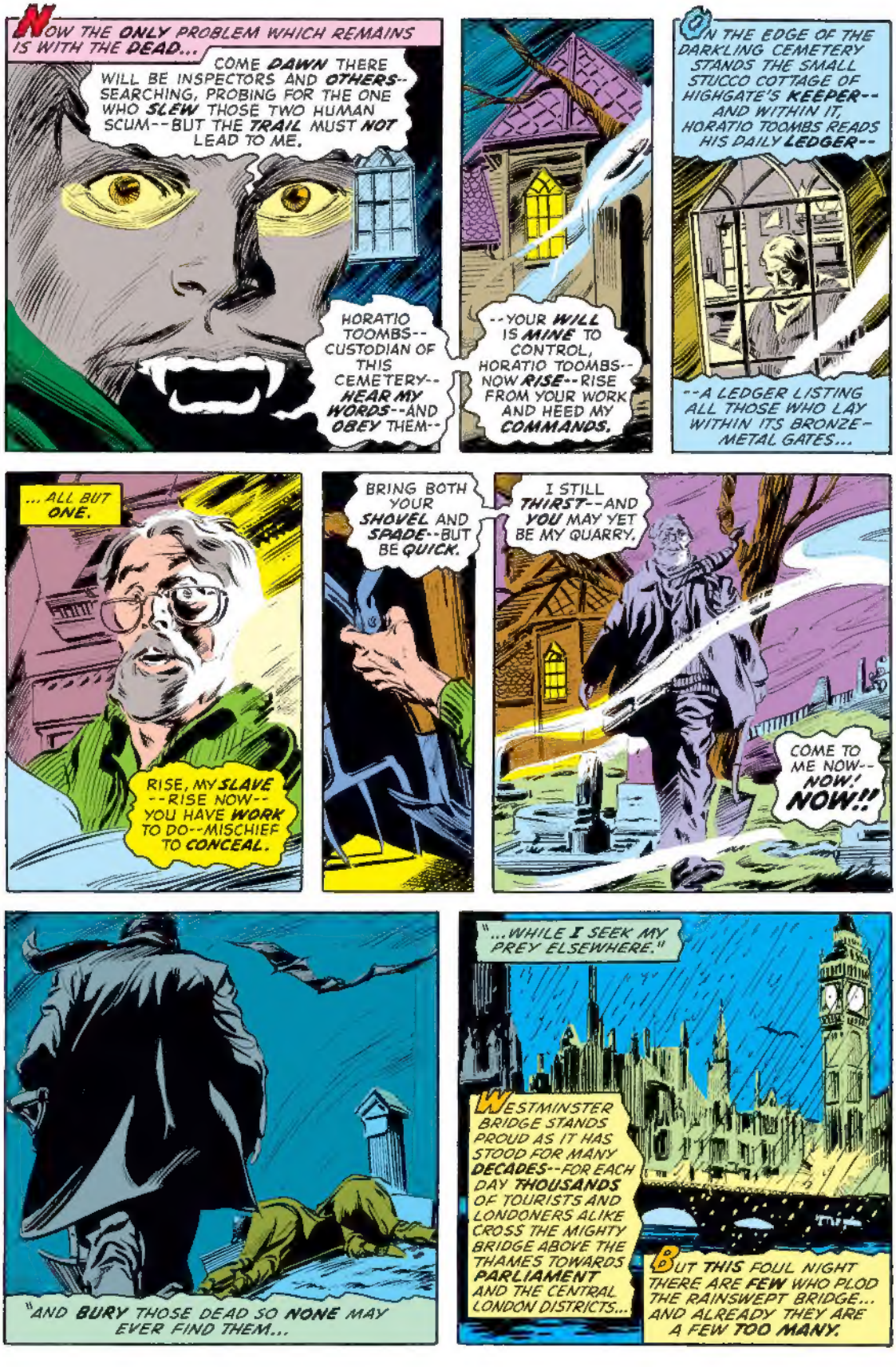
MORE'N A SKULL, INSPECTOR--'E WAS A BLOODY WALKIN' HELL.
I'M NOT COMPLAININ', YOU UNDERSTAND, BUT WHY 'E DIDN'T KILL ME THEN I DON'T KNOW. BUT I'LL TELL YOU THIS, INSPECTOR--IF 'E HAD A MIND TO, NOT EVEN ALL OF YOUR SCOTLAND YARD COULD 'AVE STOPPED 'IM.

WHILE...
I THIRST--AND THIS NIGHT IS RIPE FOR HUNTING!! SO BEWARE, FOOLISH MORTALS--ONCE MORE, DRACULA LIVES!! HA! HA! HA!
HIGHGATE CEMETERY SHIVERS UNDER THE COLD OCTOBER RAINS--THE GROUND IS HARD, PACKED--BUT FOR THE BODIES BURIED THERE FOR UNTOLD HUNDREDS OF YEARS, THE CLIMATE IS OF LITTLE IMPORT--
--RATHER, THERE IS ONLY ONE WHO RESIDES THERE WHO COULD CARE AT ALL:
DRACULA--LORD OF THE DAMNED!!

"AND WHERE BEST TO BEGIN MY PROWLING--THAN HERE IN THE CEMETERY I HAVE TAKEN AS MINE!
"AND WHOM BEST TO MAKE MY FIRST VICTIMS THIS NIGHT, THAN THOSE TWO FOOLS WHO EVEN NOW TRY STEALING THE TREASURES FROM THE SLEEPING DEAD."
TAKE 'ER EASY THERE, MATE. WE GOT TH' TIME TO TAKE CARE.

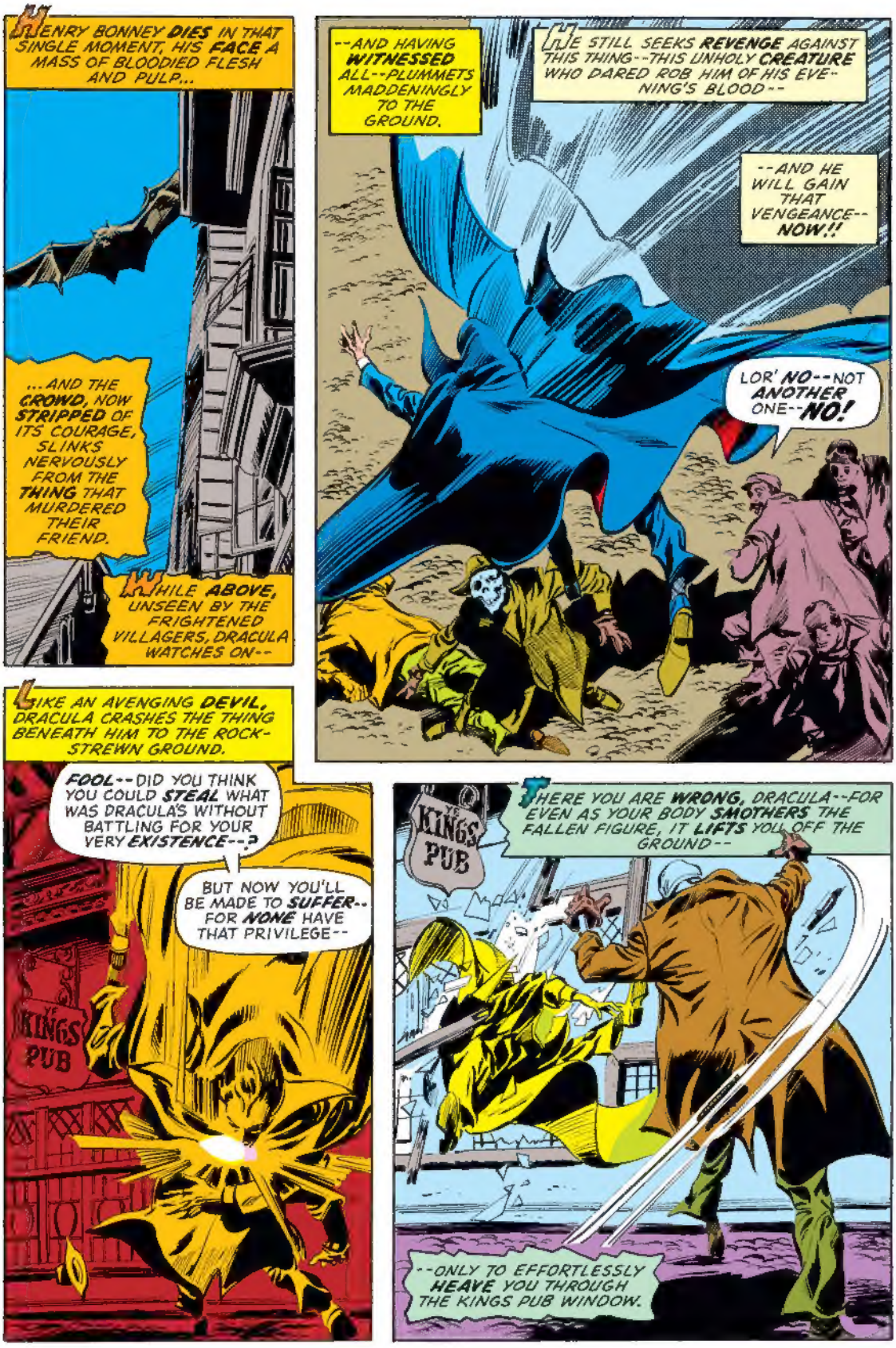

BLOKE BURIED 'ERE WAS A RICH ONE, MATE--AN' 'E'S PROB'LY WEARIN' 'IS BEST SUNDAY JEWELS T' SHOW IT.
WOTTA RACKET, SHIVVEY--TH' DEAD DON'T NEED NOTHIN'--SO WE TAKES IT FROM 'EM. HAR!

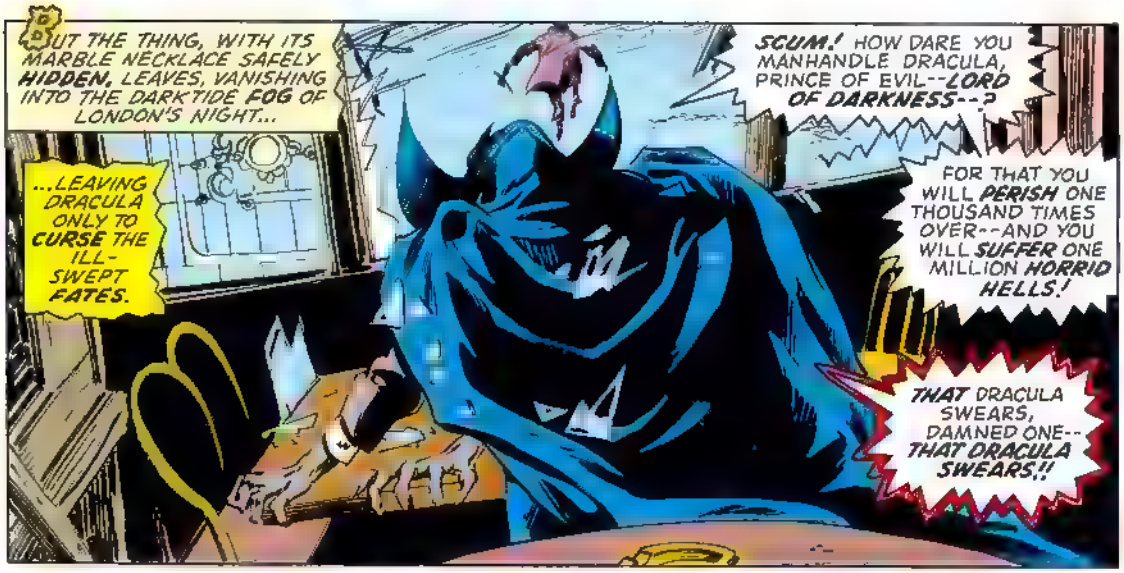
SHIVVEY, IF 'E'S GOT 'IMSELF A RUBY, KIN I KEEP IT--?
--SHIVVEY-- SH-SHIVVEY-- THE BODY--IT'S M-MOVIN'--!
ARE YOU GOIN' BLINKIN' CRAZY, MATE? LEMME LOOK FER MYSEL--
ONE BRIEF MOMENT--THE SMALLEST FRACTION OF A SECOND IS ALL IT TAKES TO SNUFF THE CANDLE OF LIFE FROM THE SOULS OF SHIVVEY MARTIN AND GORDO BROWN, GRAVEDIGGERS--
EEEYAAAGHHH!
--AND DURING THAT FLEETING MOMENT, ONE THOUGHT FLICKERS THROUGH BOTH THEIR MINDS:
THERE ARE NONE WHO WILL EVER MOURN FOR THEM.
AND FOR THAT, THEIR DEATHS ARE MOST DOUBLE PAINFUL.
WHAT--? THAT-- THING--HAS ROBBED MY DINNER--THE VERY BLOOD I NEEDED FOR LIFE--FOR STRENGTH--
VERY WELL, DAMNED CREATURE --ENJOY YOUR KILLING--
--BUT ENJOY IT WITH HASTE--
--FOR NONE MAY STEAL WHAT IS DRACULA'S WITHOUT ANSWERING TO HIS VENGEANCE.
BUT-- WAIT-- THE THING... DISINTEGRATES--
--AND FALLS AS ASHES BACK INTO THE GRAVE.
NO! IT CANNOT BE--I MUSTN'T BE ROBBED OF MY PREY SO EASILY.
BUT THERE IS NOTHING LEFT TO BATTLE--AT LEAST NOTHING THAT LIVES.

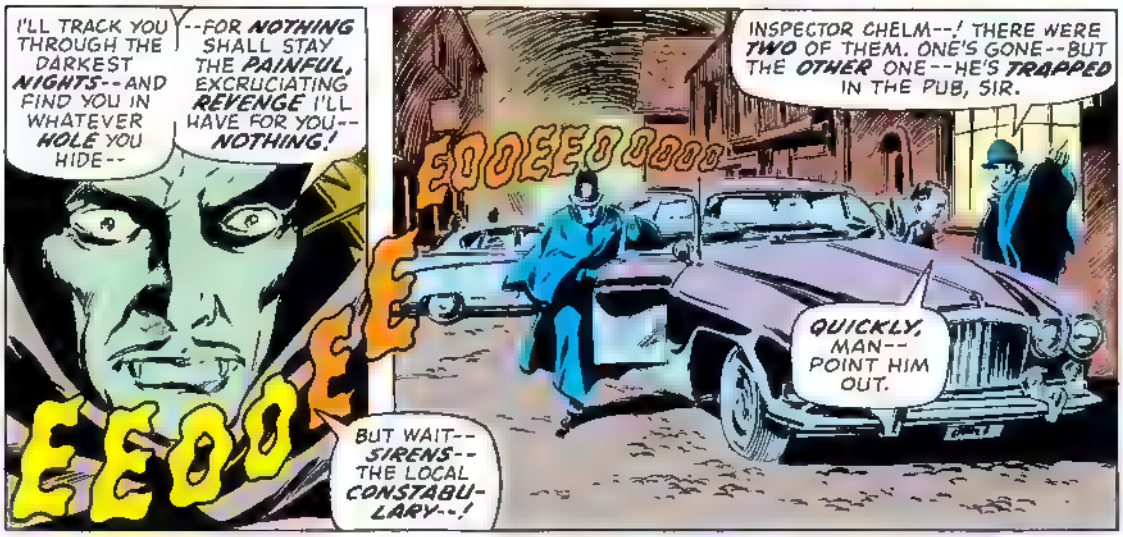

NOW THE ONLY PROBLEM WHICH REMAINS IS WITH THE DEAD...
COME DAWN THERE WILL BE INSPECTORS AND OTHERS--SEARCHING, PROBING FOR THE ONE WHO SLEW THOSE TWO HUMAN SCUM--BUT THE TRAIL MUST NOT LEAD TO ME.
HORATIO TOOMBS--CUSTODIAN OF THIS CEMETERY--HEAR MY WORDS--AND OBEY THEM--
--YOUR WILL IS MINE TO CONTROL, HORATIO TOOMBS--NOW RISE--RISE FROM YOUR WORK AND HEED MY COMMANDS.
ON THE EDGE OF THE DARKLING CEMETERY STANDS THE SMALL STUCCO COTTAGE OF HIGHGATE'S KEEPER--AND WITHIN IT, HORATIO TOOMBS READS HIS DAILY LEDGER--
--A LEDGER LISTING ALL THOSE WHO LAY WITHIN ITS BRONZE-METAL GATES...
... ALL BUT ONE.
RISE, MY SLAVE --RISE NOW-- YOU HAVE WORK TO DO--MISCHIEF TO CONCEAL.
BRING BOTH YOUR SHOVEL AND SPADE--BUT BE QUICK.
I STILL THIRST--AND YOU MAY YET BE MY QUARRY.
COME TO ME NOW-- NOW! NOW!!
"AND BURY THOSE DEAD SO NONE MAY EVER FIND THEM...
"...WHILE I SEEK MY PREY ELSEWHERE."
WESTMINSTER BRIDGE STANDS PROUD AS IT HAS STOOD FOR MANY DECADES--FOR EACH DAY THOUSANDS OF TOURISTS AND LONDONERS ALIKE CROSS THE MIGHTY BRIDGE ABOVE THE THAMES TOWARDS PARLIAMENT AND THE CENTRAL LONDON DISTRICTS...
BUT THIS FOUL NIGHT THERE ARE FEW WHO PLOD THE RAINSWEPT BRIDGE... AND ALREADY THEY ARE A FEW TOO MANY.

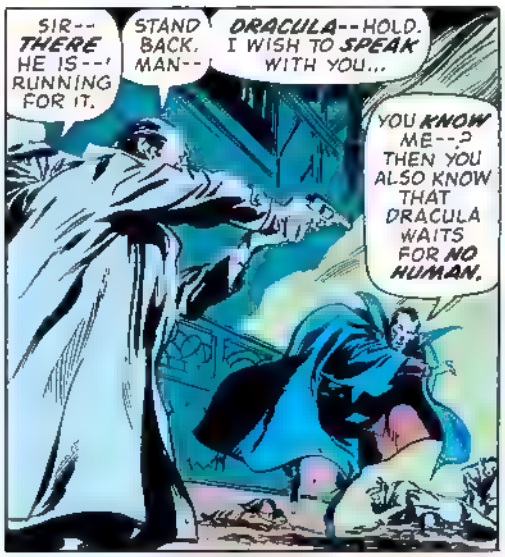
MARIE KOMPH HAD PLANNED WELL FOR HER SUICIDE. SHE LEFT A CAREFULLY WORDED NOTE, PAID ALL HER BILLS, AND THEN TOOK THE SLOW WALK TO WESTMINSTER.
SHE KNEW SHE COULDN'T FACE HER PARENTS--NOT AFTER WHAT HAPPENED--CERTAINLY NOT AFTER THAT.
THEY HAD WARNED HER ABOUT HIM--BUT SHE CHOSE TO IGNORE THEIR WORDS AS FOOLISH PARENTAL CONCERN.
BUT THIS TIME THEY WERE RIGHT...
HOLD, WOMAN. I WISH TO SPEAK WITH YOU...
...AND BECAUSE MARIE COULD NOT ADMIT IT--SHE HAD TO DIE.
SHE LOOKS OVER THE EDGE OF THE STONE RAILING INTO THE BLACK-PITCH WATERS, WHEN THROUGH THE BLUE-GREEN FOG COMES--A MAN--?
NO--MORE THAN A MAN--RATHER, A DEMON--THE DEMON CALLED DRACULA.
...AND THERE IS MUCH TO SPEAK ABOUT INDEED. HA! HA! HA!
MARIE KOMPH SUDDENLY UNDERSTANDS HOW WASTED DEATH CAN BE--BUT TRAGICALLY THAT UNDERSTANDING COMES MOMENTS TOO LATE.
WHILE...
MR. HARKER--? INSPECTOR CHELM OF SCOTLAND YARD HERE. DR. RACHEL VAN HELSING GAVE ME YOUR NUMBER TO CALL IN IN AN EMERGENCY...
I BELIEVE, SIR--THAT YOUR OLD NEMESIS, DRACULA, IS ON THE LOOSE.
HMMM. INTERESTING, INSPECTOR--BUT IT DOESN'T FIT DRACULA'S PATTERN.
I'M SORRY, BUT I THINK THERE MAY BE SOMEONE ELSE YOU'RE DEALING WITH.
BUT IF I MAY BE OF ANY ASSISTANCE--
MINUTES AFTER...
INSPECTOR CHELM--WE'VE JUST RECEIVED A REPORT--
"SEEMS TO BE SOME MAJOR TROUBLE DOWN ON COVENTRY STREET, SIR--BUREAU THINKS IT MAY BE YOUR BLOKE, SIR."

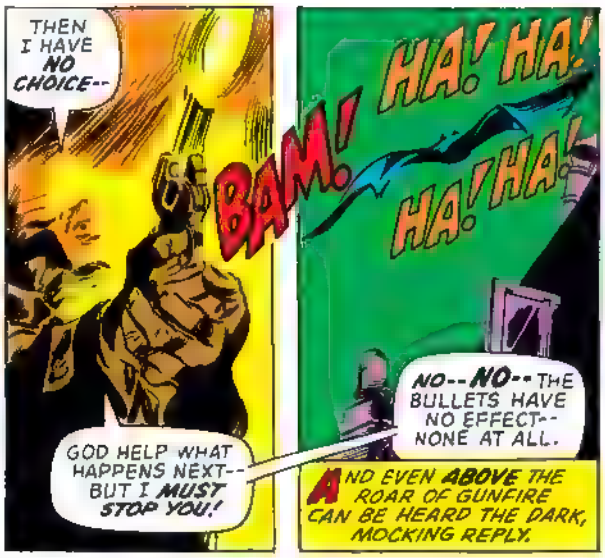
A SILENT TABLEAU: THOUGH ALMOST THIRTY PATRONS OF YE KINGS PUB LOOK ON, NOT ONE SPEAKS--AND WORSE--NONE MOVES TO STOP THE TALL, BONEY FORM...
...AS IT SHUFFLES ACROSS A COBBLESTONE STREET TOWARDS A TALL, ATTRACTIVE WOMAN.
INDEED, EVEN THERESA BEARE HERSELF STANDS STARRING--PERHAPS IN SILENT TERROR, AS THE HAND RIPS THE MARBLE-STONE LOCKET FROM HER...
...AND PLACES ITS NEWEST PRIZE IN ITS POCKET. HOPEFULLY, IT FEELS, THE WOMAN WILL UNDERSTAND.
BUT THIS IS NO TIME FOR UNDERSTANDING, FOR--AS IF SHAMED BY THEIR OWN NONACTION--THE CROWD OF PATRONS CLOSES ABOUT THE FIGURE--
C'MON, YOU BLITHERS--WE CAN'T LET THIS THING ATTACK OUR WOMEN--
--AND ATTACKS.
--FIGHT 'IM--WITH STICKS OR BRICKS--OR EVEN YOUR FISTS--BUT FIGHT!!
'ENRY'S RIGHT--GIT THE BLOODY MONSTER--'E'S ONLY ONE--
--ONE TO OUR MANY!
BUT THE THING'S HAND SHOOTS OUT, AND BONE AND CARTILAGE CRUMBLE UNDER ITS GRASP.

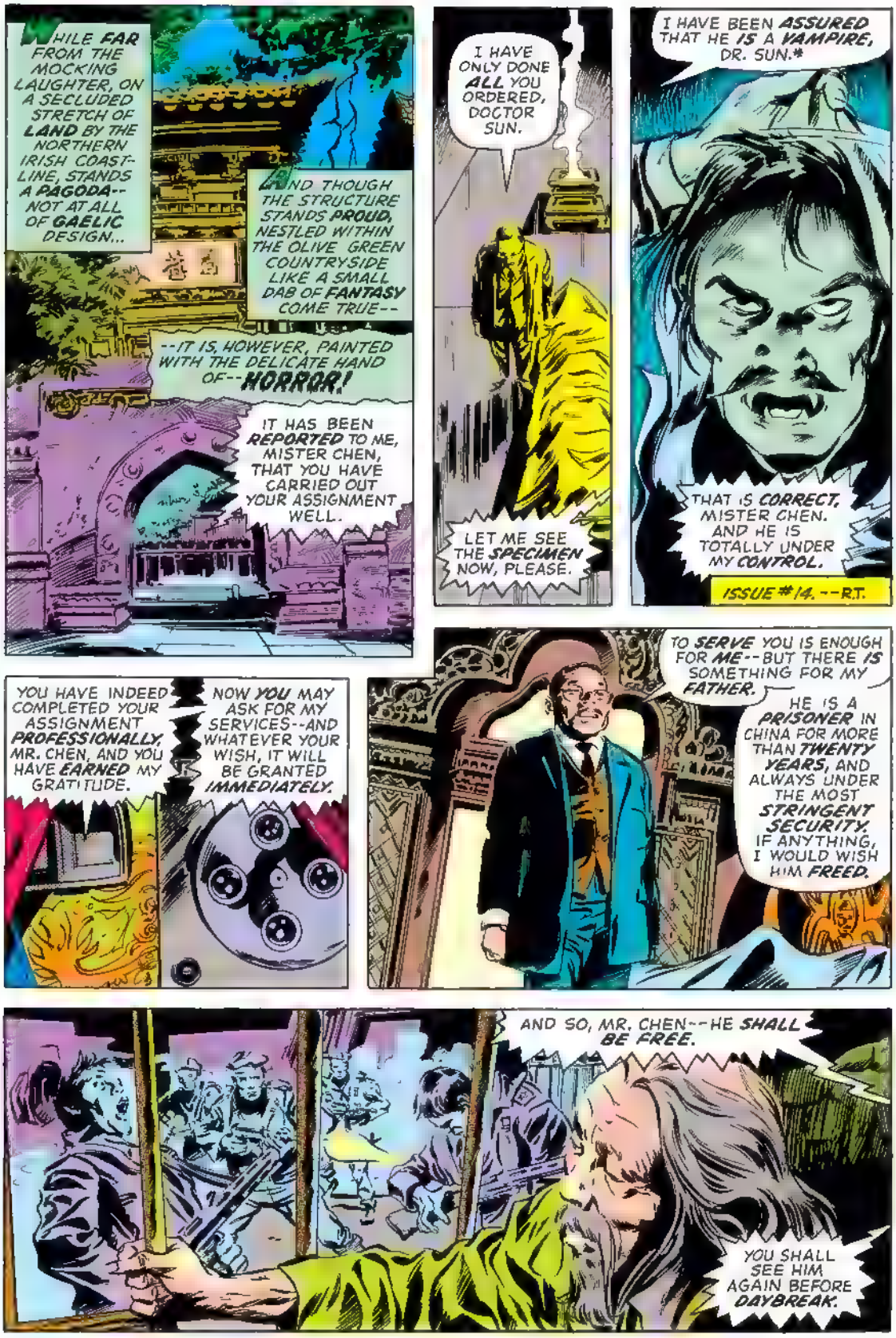

HENRY BONNEY DIES IN THAT SINGLE MOMENT, HIS FACE A MASS OF BLOODIED FLESH AND PULP...
...AND THE CROWD, NOW STRIPPED OF ITS COURAGE, SLINKS NERVOUSLY FROM THE THING THAT MURDERED THEIR FRIEND.
WHILE ABOVE, UNSEEN BY THE FRIGHTENED VILLAGERS, DRACULA WATCHES ON--
--AND HAVING WITNESSED ALL--PLUMMETS MADDENINGLY TO THE GROUND.
HE STILL SEEKS REVENGE AGAINST THIS THING--THIS UNHOLY CREATURE WHO DARED ROB HIM OF HIS EVENING'S BLOOD--
--AND HE WILL GAIN THAT VENGEANCE--NOW!!
LOR' NO--NOT ANOTHER ONE--NO!
LIKE AN AVENGING DEVIL, DRACULA CRASHES THE THING BENEATH HIM TO THE ROCK-STREWN GROUND.
FOOL--DID YOU THINK YOU COULD STEAL WHAT WAS DRACULA'S WITHOUT BATTLING FOR YOUR VERY EXISTENCE--?
BUT NOW YOU'LL BE MADE TO SUFFER--FOR NONE HAVE THAT PRIVILEGE--
YE KINGS PUB
THERE YOU ARE WRONG, DRACULA--FOR EVEN AS YOUR BODY SMOTHERS THE FALLEN FIGURE, IT LIFTS YOU OFF THE GROUND--
YE KINGS PUB
--ONLY TO EFFORTLESSLY HEAVE YOU THROUGH THE KINGS PUB WINDOW.


BUT THE THING, WITH ITS MARBLE NECKLACE SAFELY HIDDEN, LEAVES, VANISHING INTO THE DARKTIDE FOG OF LONDON'S NIGHT...
...LEAVING DRACULA ONLY TO CURSE THE ILL-SWEPT FATES.
SCUM! HOW DARE YOU MANHANDLE DRACULA, PRINCE OF EVIL--LORD OF DARKNESS--?
FOR THAT YOU WILL PERISH ONE THOUSAND TIMES OVER--AND YOU WILL SUFFER ONE MILLION HORRID HELLS!
THAT DRACULA SWEARS, DAMNED ONE--THAT DRACULA SWEARS!!

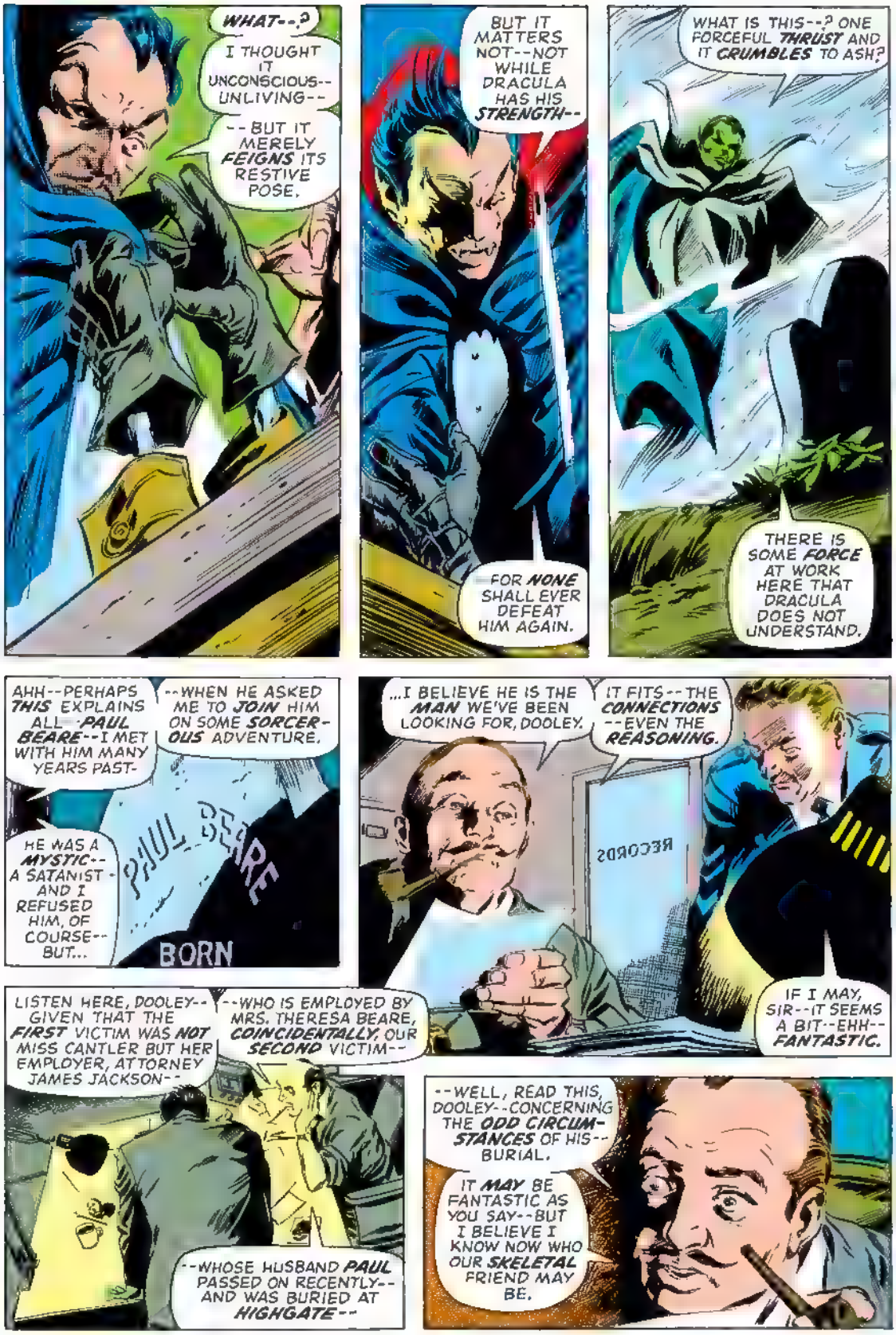

I'LL TRACK YOU THROUGH THE DARKEST NIGHTS--AND FIND YOU IN WHATEVER HOLE YOU HIDE--
--FOR NOTHING SHALL STAY THE PAINFUL, EXCRUCIATING REVENGE I'LL HAVE FOR YOU--NOTHING!
EEOOEE
INSPECTOR CHELM--! THERE WERE TWO OF THEM. ONE'S GONE--BUT THE OTHER ONE--HE'S TRAPPED IN THE PUB, SIR.
EOOEE OOOO
QUICKLY, MAN--POINT HIM OUT.
BUT WAIT--SIRENS--THE LOCAL CONSTABULARY--!

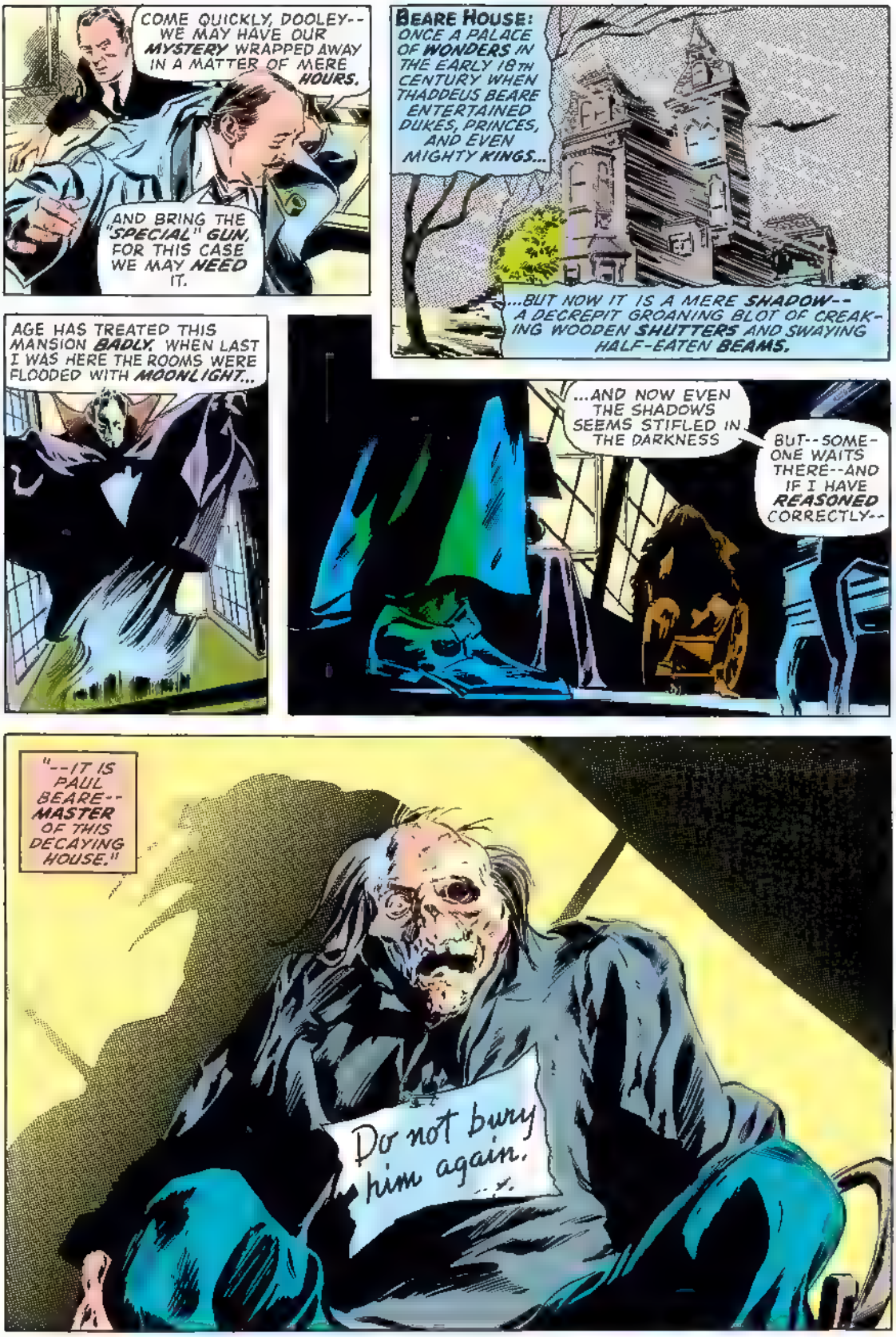

SIR--THERE HE IS--! RUNNING FOR IT.
STAND BACK, MAN--
DRACULA--HOLD. I WISH TO SPEAK WITH YOU...
YOU KNOW ME--? THEN YOU ALSO KNOW THAT DRACULA WAITS FOR NO HUMAN.


THEN I HAVE NO CHOICE--
BAM!
GOD HELP WHAT HAPPENS NEXT--BUT I MUST STOP YOU!
HA! HA! HA! HA!
NO--NO--THE BULLETS HAVE NO EFFECT--NONE AT ALL.
AND EVEN ABOVE THE ROAR OF GUNFIRE CAN BE HEARD THE DARK, MOCKING REPLY.

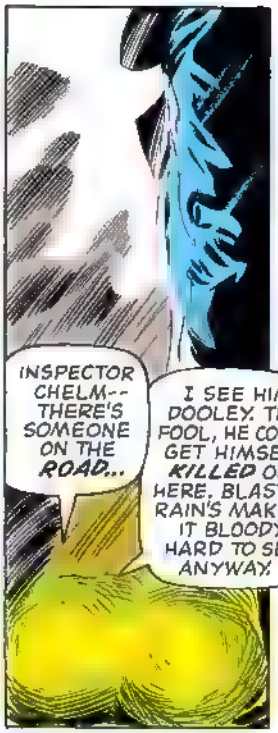

WHILE FAR FROM THE MOCKING LAUGHTER, ON A SECLUDED STRETCH OF LAND BY THE NORTHERN IRISH COAST-LINE, STANDS A PAGODA--NOT AT ALL OF GAELIC DESIGN...
AND THOUGH THE STRUCTURE STANDS PROUD, NESTLED WITHIN THE OLIVE GREEN COUNTRYSIDE LIKE A SMALL DAB OF FANTASY COME TRUE--
--IT IS, HOWEVER, PAINTED WITH THE DELICATE HAND OF--HORROR!
IT HAS BEEN REPORTED TO ME, MISTER CHEN, THAT YOU HAVE CARRIED OUT YOUR ASSIGNMENT WELL.
I HAVE ONLY DONE ALL YOU ORDERED, DOCTOR SUN.
LET ME SEE THE SPECIMEN NOW, PLEASE.
I HAVE BEEN ASSURED THAT HE IS A VAMPIRE, DR. SUN.*
THAT IS CORRECT, MISTER CHEN. AND HE IS TOTALLY UNDER MY CONTROL.
ISSUE #14. --R.T.
YOU HAVE INDEED COMPLETED YOUR ASSIGNMENT PROFESSIONALLY, MR. CHEN, AND YOU HAVE EARNED MY GRATITUDE.
NOW YOU MAY ASK FOR MY SERVICES--AND WHATEVER YOUR WISH, IT WILL BE GRANTED IMMEDIATELY.
TO SERVE YOU IS ENOUGH FOR ME--BUT THERE IS SOMETHING FOR MY FATHER.
HE IS A PRISONER IN CHINA FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS, AND ALWAYS UNDER THE MOST STRINGENT SECURITY. IF ANYTHING, I WOULD WISH HIM FREED.
AND SO, MR. CHEN--HE SHALL BE FREE.
YOU SHALL SEE HIM AGAIN BEFORE DAYBREAK.

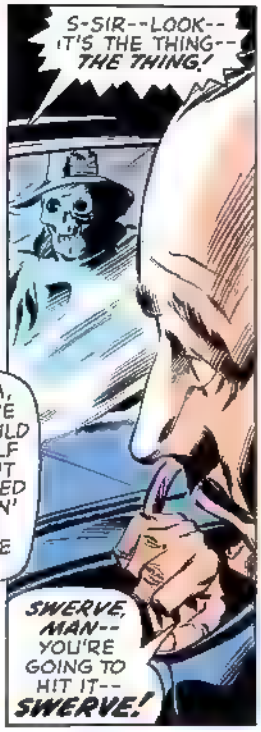
LET US LEAVE THE DARK-SHROUDED MYSTERIES OF DR. SUN FOR ANOTHER TIME--FOR NOW THE ACTION IS WITH DRACULA ..
...WHO STRUTS ONCE MORE THE MIST LADEN GROUNDS OF HIGHGATE CEMETERY
CURSE ME FOR A FOOL--I SEARCH AIMLESSLY FOR THE SKELETON-BEAST IN A CITY OF UNTOLD THOUSANDS--
WHEN FIRST I SAW HIM HERE--BURIED DEEP IN DRACULA'S DOMAIN.
PAUL
HERE--THIS WEATHERED GRAVESTONE IS HIS--AND UNDER IT..
...I SHOULD FIND MY PREY.
AHHH...YES--SOMEONE--OR SOMETHING IS BURIED IN HERE--THE COFFIN HAS WEIGHT...
AND IN MOMENTS I SHALL SEE WHAT ALL MY SENSES TELLS ME WAITS WITHIN.
A FEW SECONDS TO PREPARE MYSELF IS ALL I NEED--FOR IF INDEED THE THING IS STILL ALIVE--
--I MAY NEED ALL MY STRENGTH TO BATTLE IT...
..AND PAY IT BACK FOR OUR LITTLE MEETING EARLIER THIS NIGHT.
AHH--THERE IT LIES IN ALL ITS GRISTLY RANCOR...
WAITING FOR ME TO END ITS EXISTENCE FOREVER.

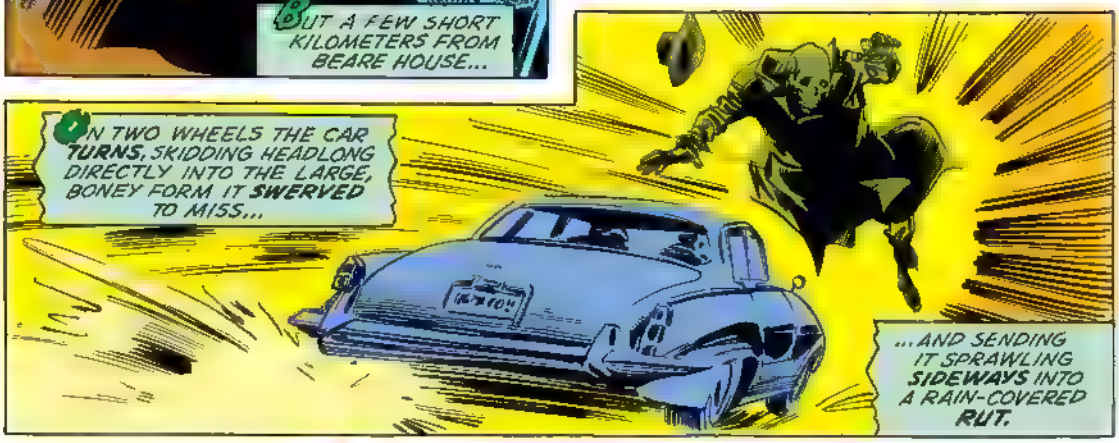

WHAT--?
I THOUGHT IT UNCONSCIOUS--UNLIVING--
--BUT IT MERELY FEIGNS ITS RESTIVE POSE.
BUT IT MATTERS NOT--NOT WHILE DRACULA HAS HIS STRENGTH--
--FOR NONE SHALL EVER DEFEAT HIM AGAIN.
WHAT IS THIS--? ONE FORCEFUL THRUST AND IT CRUMBLES TO ASH?
THERE IS SOME FORCE AT WORK HERE THAT DRACULA DOES NOT UNDERSTAND.
AHH--PERHAPS THIS EXPLAINS ALL--PAUL BEARE--I MET WITH HIM MANY YEARS PAST-
--WHEN HE ASKED ME TO JOIN HIM ON SOME SORCEROUS ADVENTURE.
HE WAS A MYSTIC--A SATANIST--AND I REFUSED HIM, OF COURSE--BUT...
PAUL BEARE
BORN
...I BELIEVE HE IS THE MAN WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR, DOOLEY.
IT FITS--THE CONNECTIONS--EVEN THE REASONING.
RECORDS
IF I MAY, SIR--IT SEEMS A BIT--EHH--FANTASTIC.
LISTEN HERE, DOOLEY--GIVEN THAT THE FIRST VICTIM WAS NOT MISS CANTLER BUT HER EMPLOYER, ATTORNEY JAMES JACKSON--
--WHO IS EMPLOYED BY MRS. THERESA BEARE, COINCIDENTALLY, OUR SECOND VICTIM--
--WHOSE HUSBAND PAUL PASSED ON RECENTLY--AND WAS BURIED AT HIGHGATE--
--WELL, READ THIS, DOOLEY--CONCERNING THE ODD CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS--BURIAL.
IT MAY BE FANTASTIC AS YOU SAY--BUT I BELIEVE I KNOW NOW WHO OUR SKELETAL FRIEND MAY BE.

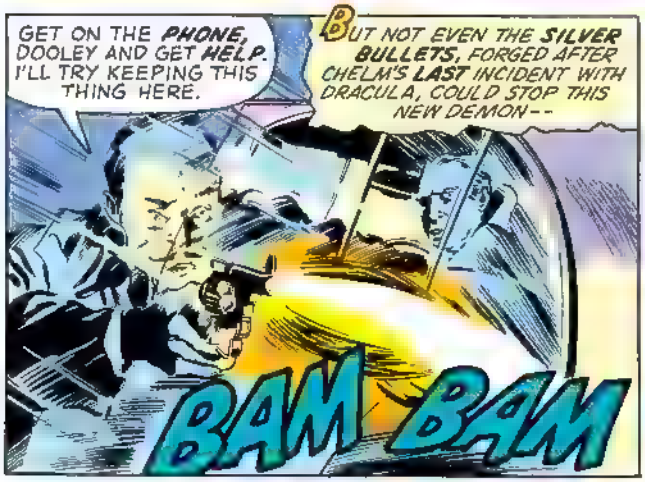

COME QUICKLY, DOOLEY--WE MAY HAVE OUR MYSTERY WRAPPED AWAY IN A MATTER OF MERE HOURS.
AND BRING THE "SPECIAL" GUN, FOR THIS CASE WE MAY NEED IT.
BEARE HOUSE: ONCE A PALACE OF WONDERS IN THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY WHEN THADDEUS BEARE ENTERTAINED DUKES, PRINCES, AND EVEN MIGHTY KINGS...
...BUT NOW IT IS A MERE SHADOW--A DECREPIT GROANING BLOT OF CREAKING WOODEN SHUTTERS AND SWAYING HALF-EATEN BEAMS.
AGE HAS TREATED THIS MANSION BADLY. WHEN LAST I WAS HERE THE ROOMS WERE FLOODED WITH MOONLIGHT...
...AND NOW EVEN THE SHADOWS SEEMS STIFLED IN THE DARKNESS
BUT--SOMEONE WAITS THERE--AND IF I HAVE REASONED CORRECTLY--
"--IT IS PAUL BEARE--MASTER OF THIS DECAYING HOUSE."
Do not bury him again.
..r.

YES, THOUGH TIME AND DEATH HAVE DECAYED HIS FEATURES--THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT--
--THIS MAN IS BEARE. AND YET, HOW HE CAME HERE AND FOR WHAT REASON--I'VE STILL TO LEARN.
BUT THERE SHALL BE TIME FOR THAT AFTER I'VE BURIED HIM ONCE MORE.
BUT A FEW SHORT KILOMETERS FROM BEARE HOUSE...


INSPECTOR CHELM--THERE'S SOMEONE ON THE ROAD...
I SEE HIM, DOOLEY. THE FOOL, HE COULD GET HIMSELF KILLED OUT HERE. BLASTED RAIN'S MAKIN' IT BLOODY HARD TO SEE ANYWAY.

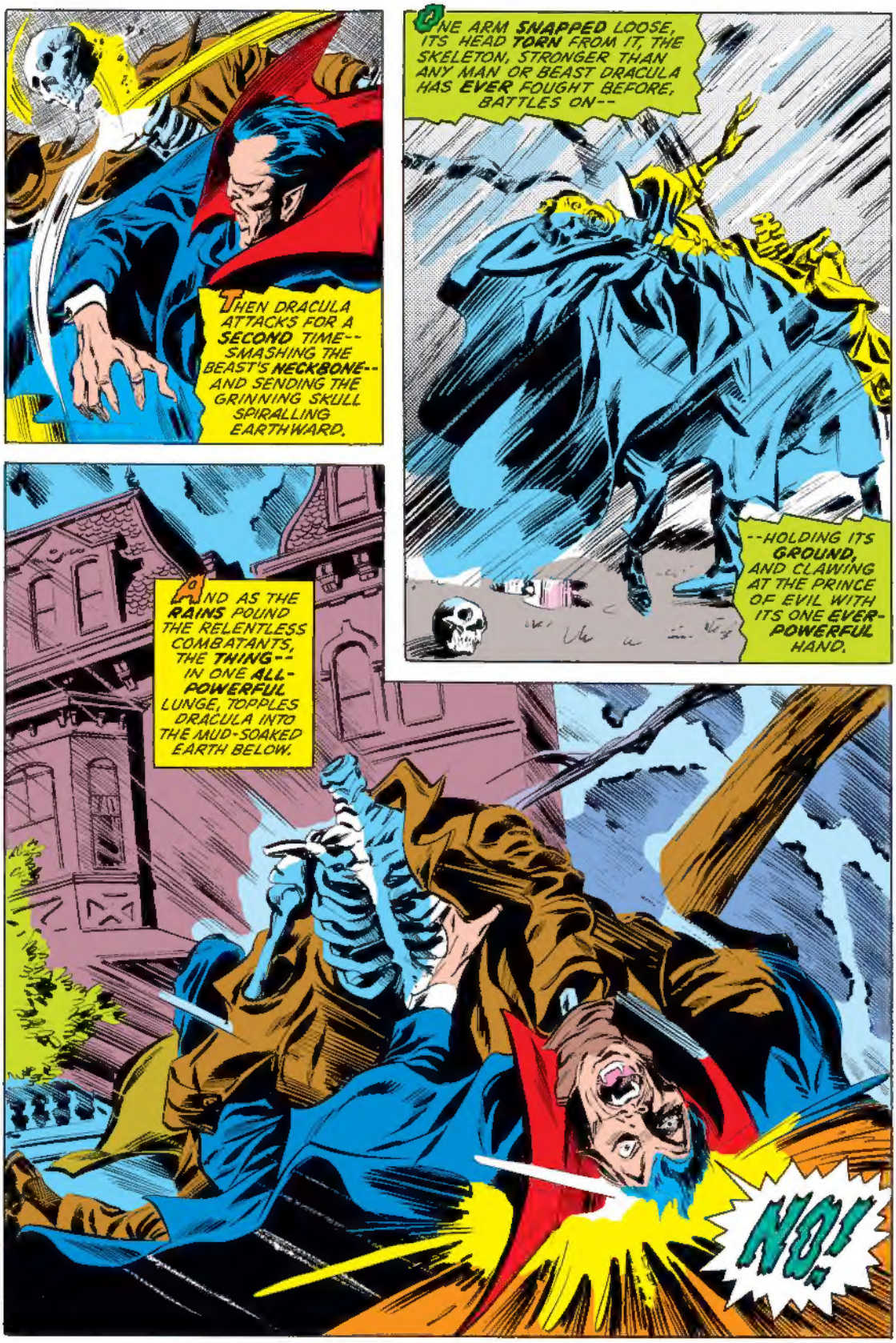

S-SIR--LOOK--IT'S THE THING--THE THING!
SWERVE, MAN--YOU'RE GOING TO HIT IT--SWERVE!


ON TWO WHEELS THE CAR TURNS, SKIDDING HEADLONG DIRECTLY INTO THE LARGE, BONEY FORM IT SWERVED TO MISS...
...AND SENDING IT SPRAWLING SIDEWAYS INTO A RAIN-COVERED RUT.

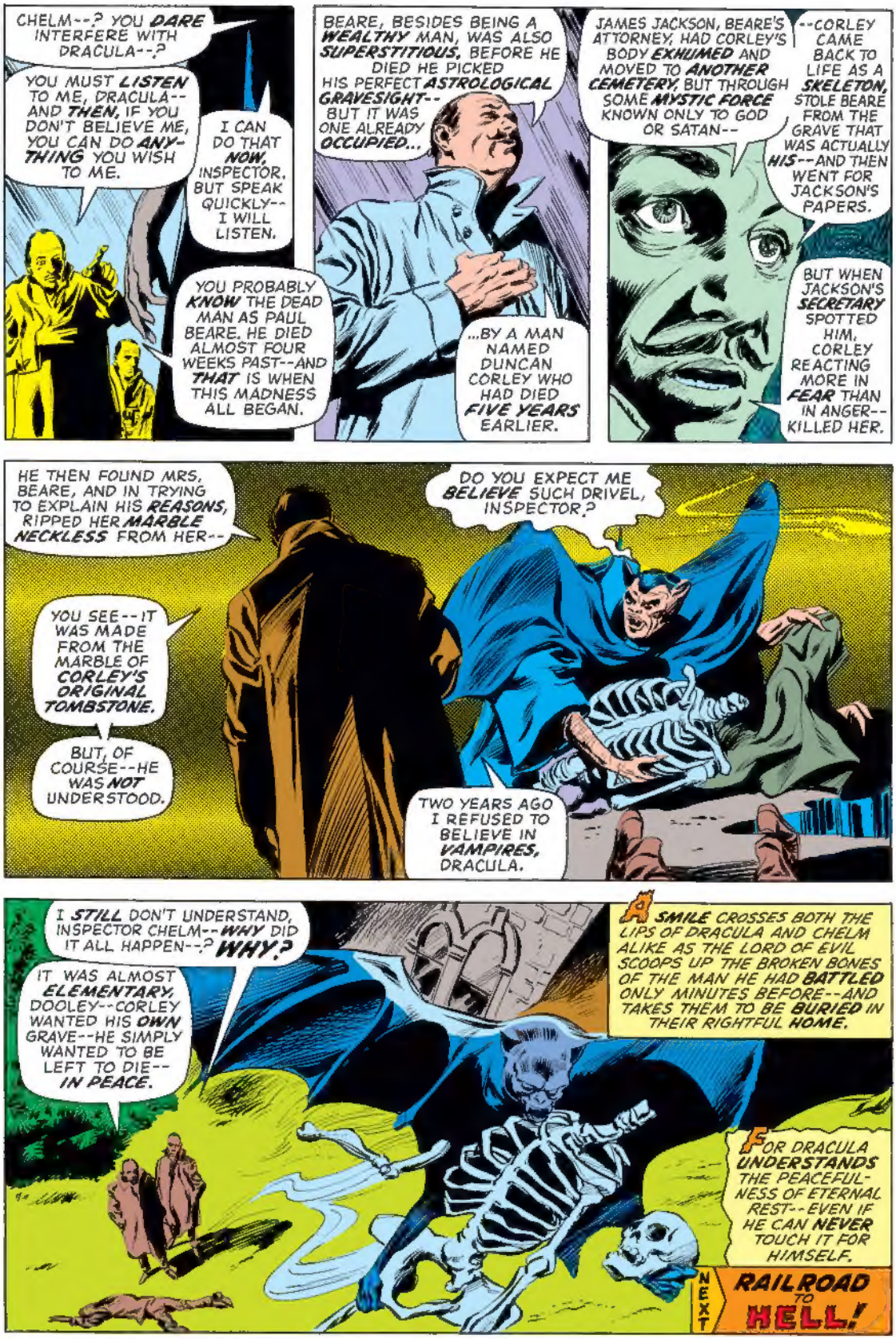

GET ON THE PHONE, DOOLEY AND GET HELP. I'LL TRY KEEPING THIS THING HERE.
BUT NOT EVEN THE SILVER BULLETS, FORGED AFTER CHELM'S LAST INCIDENT WITH DRACULA, COULD STOP THIS NEW DEMON--
BAM BAM

...WHO STALKS EVER CLOSER TO THE SCOTLAND YARD INSPECTOR--THEN...
ACCHHH!

STEPPING OVER CHELM, IT MOVES ON TOWARDS BEARE HOUSE TO COMPLETE ITS MISSION THERE--
--AND NO HUMAN-- NO PUNY INSPECTOR SHALL PREVENT ITS DEADLY CONCLUSION.
BUT--
WHAT--? TWICE I DESTROY YOU-- AND TWICE YOU RETURN FROM THE GRAVE--?
HOW YOU PERFORMED THAT MAGIC I NEITHER KNOW NOR CARE--
--BUT THIS TIME YOU'LL NOT ESCAPE FROM ANYWHERE, MY BONEY FOE.
SUDDENLY AN ARM--A SKELETAL FIST OF FLYING DEATH LASHES OUT--AND SMASHES INTO DRACULA--
--SENDING HIM SPRAWLING BACKWARDS IN THE PATH OF THE DRIVING RAIN.
DRACULA'S LIPS SMILE BITTERLY, HIS EYES NARROW INTO HATEFUL, VENGEFUL SLITS--
--AND HE ATTACKS!
HIS OWN STEEL-TENDONED ARM GRABS THAT OF THE SKELETON'S, AND DRACULA YANKS--
--FRACTURING AND SHATTERING THE SKELETAL BONES!


THEN DRACULA ATTACKS FOR A SECOND TIME--SMASHING THE BEAST'S NECKBONE--AND SENDING THE GRINNING SKULL SPIRALLING EARTHWARD.
ONE ARM SNAPPED LOOSE, ITS HEAD TORN FROM IT, THE SKELETON, STRONGER THAN ANY MAN OR BEAST DRACULA HAS EVER FOUGHT BEFORE, BATTLES ON--
--HOLDING ITS GROUND, AND CLAWING AT THE PRINCE OF EVIL WITH ITS ONE EVER-POWERFUL HAND.
AND AS THE RAINS POUND THE RELENTLESS COMBATANTS, THE THING--IN ONE ALL-POWERFUL LUNGE, TOPPLES DRACULA INTO THE MUD-SOAKED EARTH BELOW.
NO!

But even as its hand closes tight on Dracula's throat--
--from whatever hell-spawned hole you're from, fiend--
--you'll not battle Dracula--
--and live--
--never! never! never!
CRACK
The powerful blows are delivered with an anguish borne with 500 years of living in hell--
--and they are blows which nothing can survive.
Its backbone cleaved in half, the skeleton crumbles once more--leaving only the constant rain to wash away its dying ashes.
Again it falls--and perhaps it shall rise once more--
For there is a mystery here that baffles even me.
Yet now is not the time to ponder such questions--for this corpse must be buried--
--and quickly--before the authorities can trace him back to high--
Don't bury him, Dracula--you mustn't.
Eh--?


CHELM--? YOU DARE INTERFERE WITH DRACULA--?
YOU MUST LISTEN TO ME, DRACULA--AND THEN, IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, YOU CAN DO ANYTHING YOU WISH TO ME.
I CAN DO THAT NOW, INSPECTOR. BUT SPEAK QUICKLY--I WILL LISTEN.
YOU PROBABLY KNOW THE DEAD MAN AS PAUL BEARE. HE DIED ALMOST FOUR WEEKS PAST--AND THAT IS WHEN THIS MADNESS ALL BEGAN.
BEARE, BESIDES BEING A WEALTHY MAN, WAS ALSO SUPERSTITIOUS, BEFORE HE DIED HE PICKED HIS PERFECT ASTROLOGICAL GRAVESIGHT--BUT IT WAS ONE ALREADY OCCUPIED...
...BY A MAN NAMED DUNCAN CORLEY WHO HAD DIED FIVE YEARS EARLIER.
JAMES JACKSON, BEARE'S ATTORNEY, HAD CORLEY'S BODY EXHUMED AND MOVED TO ANOTHER CEMETERY, BUT THROUGH SOME MYSTIC FORCE KNOWN ONLY TO GOD OR SATAN--
--CORLEY CAME BACK TO LIFE AS A SKELETON, STOLE BEARE FROM THE GRAVE THAT WAS ACTUALLY HIS--AND THEN WENT FOR JACKSON'S PAPERS.
BUT WHEN JACKSON'S SECRETARY SPOTTED HIM, CORLEY REACTING MORE IN FEAR THAN IN ANGER--KILLED HER.
HE THEN FOUND MRS. BEARE, AND IN TRYING TO EXPLAIN HIS REASONS, RIPPED HER MARBLE NECKLESS FROM HER--
YOU SEE--IT WAS MADE FROM THE MARBLE OF CORLEY'S ORIGINAL TOMBSTONE.
BUT, OF COURSE--HE WAS NOT UNDERSTOOD.
DO YOU EXPECT ME BELIEVE SUCH DRIVEL, INSPECTOR?
TWO YEARS AGO I REFUSED TO BELIEVE IN VAMPIRES, DRACULA.
I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND, INSPECTOR CHELM--WHY DID IT ALL HAPPEN--? WHY?
IT WAS ALMOST ELEMENTARY, DOOLEY--CORLEY WANTED HIS OWN GRAVE--HE SIMPLY WANTED TO BE LEFT TO DIE--IN PEACE.
A SMILE CROSSES BOTH THE LIPS OF DRACULA AND CHELM ALIKE AS THE LORD OF EVIL SCOOPS UP THE BROKEN BONES OF THE MAN HE HAD BATTLED ONLY MINUTES BEFORE--AND TAKES THEM TO BE BURIED IN THEIR RIGHTFUL HOME.
FOR DRACULA UNDERSTANDS THE PEACEFULNESS OF ETERNAL REST--EVEN IF HE CAN NEVER TOUCH IT FOR HIMSELF.
NEXT
RAILROAD TO HELL!